

minimal, ensuring tax payer funds are spent almost exclusively on "boots on the ground."

This modest proposal offers a highly effective way to stretch our limited foreign aid dollars to advance our national security interests, promote better environmental stewardship, avoid conflicts, encourage sustainable development and alleviate poverty.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. Let's take advantage of this unique opportunity presented by a highly qualified corps of U.S. professionals to help developing countries establish good governance.

AVIATION SECURITY STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION ACT OF 2013

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation that strengthens our transportation security.

The 9/11 Commission identified key vulnerabilities that existed across our transportation security and how they were exploited by the 9/11 hijackers.

Soon after 9/11, industry representatives across the transportation sector, including labor, cargo and aviation representatives came together to support the Transportation Security Administration in developing a robust and layered security program that addressed threats and vulnerabilities across the aviation security.

The Aviation Security Advisory Committee, first established in 1989 after the Pan American World Airways Flight 103, has played a critical role in the development of transportation security policies and protocols.

However, under TSA, the ASAC remained inactive for several years and reportedly reorganized in 2008 and renewed with a charter in 2011 after receiving pressure from Congress to reconstitute this group.

This was done after stakeholders expressed ongoing frustrations to Congress about the lack in dialog between them and TSA in developing transportation security policies.

This legislation will establish the Aviation Security Advisory Committee (ASAC) into law and will ensure that TSA engages with critical stakeholders prior and throughout the modification of critical policy changes such as the one announced last week.

Specifically, my legislation authorizes the ASAC and requires the establishment of targeted working groups on air cargo, general aviation, perimeter security and risk based security, which will allow the ASAC to address security issues that require effective collaboration between the government and the private sector.

One glaring example that underscores the need for this legislation is TSA's recent decision to modify its prohibited items list and allow knives and sporting equipment that could be used as weapons through checkpoint security without a robust and formal engagement with stakeholders.

TSA decided that passengers would be allowed to bring knives with blades as long as 2.36 inches on airplanes. Further, TSA ad-

justed its "Prohibited Items List" to allow passengers to bring up to one hockey stick, one lacrosse stick, two golf clubs, and small souvenir bats as carry on items.

Not surprising, this announcement immediately received significant criticism from industry representatives, air carriers, passenger groups, flight attendants, pilots, law enforcement groups and even the representative for TSA's frontline screener workforce.

I too have expressed my deepest concerns with this policy, not just because TSA is allowing certain questionable items aboard a plane without a justification for its decision, but because TSA decided not to consult with stakeholder representatives prior to announcing changes to this policy.

The general public and stakeholders such as flight attendants, pilots, airlines, and air marshals are the most affected by this decision.

By authorizing the ASAC into law, we can ensure that TSA will not dismantle the important advisory committee and be required to utilize this valuable mechanism when developing policies that impact millions of passengers and critical stakeholders.

I want to also recognize my colleagues Congressman RICHMOND, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Transportation Security, and all other members of the Subcommittee, including Congresswoman JACKSON LEE and Congressman SWALWELL, as original cosponsors to this legislation.

Enactment of my legislation will increase security in the aviation system and mitigate ever-present terrorist threats.

HONORING JOHN J. SERPA

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2013

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a beloved leader in the San Joaquin Valley, John J. Serpa. Patriarch of the Serpa family, John passed away due to heart failure on March 5, 2013.

John was born in 1925 at the family's ranch house in the wilds of Siskiyou County. The first son of immigrants Joseph Cardoza Serpa and Luduvina Texeira, John attended school in Etna at Mound School, one of California's disappearing one-room schools in the Scarface Hamlin Gulch area of the Scott Mountain Range. Even as a young boy, John's concern was always the welfare of this family. The Great Depression had swept through the country like wildfire, causing the family to lose its ranch, its livestock and its way of life. John's sense of family responsibility sent him to work driving a derrick for more fortunate neighboring ranchers. He earned 75 cents a day, which he gave his mother for groceries, although he himself was without shoes.

The family moved to Stockton in 1936, when John's father learned of an opportunity to obtain ranching property there. John soon became his father's right-hand man in managing the family's holdings. He graduated from Stockton High School, where he excelled in sports and business curriculum. He enrolled at College of the Pacific (now University of the

Pacific), and quickly became a member of the university's renowned football team under the guidance of its famed coach, Amos Alonzo Staff.

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, John's classmates were drafted into the military to serve their country in World War II. Although he was a principal in running his father's ranch and qualified for exemption from the draft, John interrupted his education to enlist in the United States Marines. He was sent to boot training at the Marine Corps Depot in San Diego, California. After completing basic training, John was transferred from San Diego to the Asiatic Pacific Theatre, seeing action in the Philippines and Okinawa, where he was severely injured.

When he returned home, John invested his military savings in ranch property that his father wanted to buy on Corral Hollow Road in Tracy. John loved law enforcement and soon left ranching to join the Tracy Police Department, where he quickly rose to the rank of Captain. He was an accomplished marksman, gun enthusiast, hunter and outdoorsman and spent his off-hours hunting elk with his brothers in the wilds of Idaho.

In January of 1952, he married Dolores Azevedo, the mother of his children, whom he met when they both were members of St. Bernard's Catholic Church. She preceded him in death on March 17, 2007.

A graduate of Delta College with emphasis on Police Science, John continued his law enforcement studies at San Jose State, UC Davis, Chabot College, Modesto Junior College, and Contra Costa Junior College. He also held an advanced certificate from California Peace Officers Standards and Training, as well as an NRA Lifetime Masters Shooters Certificate in the police combat category, under which he created and trained a police combat shooting team, winning many state championships.

John retired from the Tracy Police Department after 20 years of dedicated service, during which he greatly advanced the department's training program. After retirement, John's interest in business and community service moved him to the city of Lathrop, where he invested in real estate and became a leader in civic activities. He served two terms on the San Joaquin County Grand Jury, one term as its Vice Chairman; served on the County Board of Zoning Adjustments and the Lathrop Planning Commission; served two terms on the board of the Lathrop County Water District; served on the Lathrop Advisory Committee and Lathrop City Incorporation Committee; and was a powerful voice in numerous municipal legislative hearings. He was a past president of the Interstate 5 Association and a past president of a number of community service clubs, including the Rotary, the Kiwanis, and the Lions Clubs.

John received numerous honors and national recognition for his continuing involvement over three decades with the United States Marine Corps League. He was named Honorary National Past Commandant of the League at its national convention in Rochester, Minnesota—only the fourth time in the history of the Marine Corps League that a member has been granted that title.

John is survived by his current wife of 27 years, Linda "Lyn" Ann-Marie Serpa; his children Gaylene Serpa of Tracy, Michael Serpa of Galt, Paul Serpa of Manteca, and John